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DAWN

Lawyers protest against 27th Amendment at SHC

• Clash with police, but force backs off and allows demo to continue • Chant slogans, carry placards for their demands • Registrar prohibited rallies within high court premises • Lights switched off at bar room as SHCBA divided over issue

By Ishaq Tanoli

KARACHI: Many lawyers in Karachi managed to enter the premises of the Sindh High Court (SHC) on Saturday after scuffling with police personnel and staged a demonstration against the 27th Amendment despite the instructions of the SHC registrar not to use its premises for protests and rallies.

The protesting lawyers held the demonstration at an open space on the premises of the SHC after the lights of the new bar room of the Sindh High Court Bar Association (SHCBA) — the original venue for the action — were switched off as there was a division within the body over the issue.

Addressing the gathering, the lawyers' leadership strongly criticised the enactment of the amendment and vowed to continue their protests for independence of judiciary and rule of law.

They also strongly condemned the establishment the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) and asserted that the disputed amendment had undermined the authority of the Supreme Court as well as weakened the constitutional structure and higher judiciary.

Internal dispute

Last week, SHCBA Secretary Mirza Sarfaraz Ahmed had announced that the bar was holding a lawyers' convention against the 26th and 27th Constitutional Amendments on Nov 22 at the new bar room of the association.

Thereafter, a resolution was passed in an emergent meeting of the SHCBA managing committee, headed by its president Sarfaraz Ali Metlo, stating that its secretary had acted on his own without the body's authorisation as both constitutional amendments were a matter of national importance. It added that the issue fell within the executive domain of the managing committee.

On Nov 20, the SHC registrar also sent a letter to the Sindh Bar Council (SBC) as well as to the SHCBA president and secretary.

It read that the SHC premises were meant for "dispensation of justice" and could not be used on any pretext for launching rallies, protests, chanting slogans and delivering speeches as these actions would "not only undermine its sanctity, but also attract felonious liability exposing the perpetrators to disciplinary action".

The registrar refrained them from organising the protest within the SHC premises.

Later, the Karachi Bar Association (KBA) announced that it would organise a lawyers' convention on Saturday outside the SHC premises near the passport office in Saddar.

Dozens of lawyers gathered at the City Courts on Saturday morning and later they staged a rally, reaching the venue of the convention after marching on various thoroughfares.

Slogans chanted

The protesting lawyers chanted slogans against the government and amendments, carrying placards and banners inscribed with their demands.

Other lawyers also joined the participants of the rally outside the SHC and began their protest.

They scuffled with the police personnel, deputed at the SHC's main gate, and entered the high court's premises.

After the altercation, the police stepped back and let the protest continue, especially after reports that a few officers had suffered minor injuries.

The lawyers entered the new bar room of the SHCBA and continued their protest while chanting slogans against the amendment and the government.

They later took their demonstration outside the bar room after the electricity supply was switched off and various lawyers delivered speeches against the amendment.

KBA President Aamir Nawaz Warraich, General Secretary Ghulam Rehman Kora, SHCBA Secretary Mirza, former SBC vice chairman Syed Haider Imam Rizvi, Haseeb Jamali and others spoke on the occasion.

FCC finds support in apex lawyer bodies

By Nasir Iqbal

ISLAMABAD: Two premier lawyer bodies on Saturday extended support to the establishment of the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) through the recently passed 27th Amendment.

In a joint statement, the Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) and the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) affirmed that it was their two-decade-old demand that the FCC should be established with equal representation of the provinces for hearing constitutional and political matters, so that general public cases could be decided by the Supreme Court of Pakistan in a timely manner.

The statement was jointly issued by PBC Vice Chairman Chaudhry Tahir Nasrullah Warriach and SCBA President Haroonur Rashid.

According to the statement, the FCC will strengthen the federation. It said the premier bodies were watching carefully the entire process, including the appointment of judges, and would express their concerns and grievances, when needed, through decisions and resolutions of the general houses of both bodies. The statement said that the PBC and the SCBA always stood for upholding the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, the supremacy of institutions, and adherence to the Constitution.

The statement also expressed regret over certain political factions within the legal community aimed at creating chaos and division among lawyers, just to achieve their ulterior political motives and promote their political agenda. They often issue statements aimed at sabotaging the democratic system of the country, it claimed.

"We strongly reject and condemn such statements issued by the non-elected people and assure that their futile exercise will soon be rendered ineffective," the statement said.

"We, the elected representatives, want to make it explicitly clear that the PBC and SCBA, being apex bodies of the legal fraternity, were only supposed to issue statements on behalf of the institutions on national issues," it stressed.

Pakistan Railways set to outsource 11 more trains

• ADB approves $10m for railway improvement project
• PM for adopting public-private partnership for rail land

PM Shehbaz receives a presentation on initiatives to improve Pakistan Railways.—APP

By Amin Ahmed

ISLAMABAD: With the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approving $10 million in assistance for preparing the Railway Improvement Project, Pakistan Railways is moving to outsource 11 more trains, a step expected to generate an additional Rs8.5bn for the country's largest state-owned rail operator.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chaired a meeting on Pakistan Railways on Saturday, where he was informed that tenders had been floated for outsourcing the eleven passenger trains to the private sector. Pakistan Railways has already outsourced four trains.

The meeting was also informed that railway hospitals in Lahore, Karachi, Multan, Peshawar, Quetta and Sukkur were being outsourced, while the outsourcing of railway schools, colleges and rest houses was already underway. Similarly, dry ports in Islamabad, Lahore and Azakhail were also being handed over to private operators.

It was also noted that 40 luggage and brake vans had been outsourced, which are expected to bring in an additional Rs820m. The outsourcing process for two cargo express trains was in progress and is projected to generate Rs6.3bn in additional revenue.

Addressing the meeting, the premier stressed that a public-private partnership model should be adopted when managing Pakistan Railways' land and properties.

He said that the railway system serves as the backbone of a country's economy and directed that top-tier legal and economic experts be engaged, especially for projects related to regional connectivity and cross-border rail links.

He appreciated the ongoing measures for the revival of the railway system and commended Railways Minister Hanif Abbasi and his team.

The meeting was informed that the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul train service would resume soon, and preliminary work on the Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan rail corridor was underway.

A plan was being developed for upgrading the Karachi–Kotri section of Main Line-1 and Main Line-3.

The premier was informed that so far, 155 railway stations have been equipped with solar power. Seven digital portals under the 'Rabta' initiative are operational, 56 trains have been shifted onto the new system, and 54 stations have been digitised.

Free Wi-Fi service has been provided at the Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Faisalabad stations.

An online freight booking system has been launched while a pilot digital weighing bridge has been installed at Karachi City Railway Station.

To enhance security, 148 AI-powered surveillance cameras have been installed, and ATM machines are being set up at railway stations.

Cleanliness services have also been outsourced.

At the Pakistan Population Summit 2025

"It's high time for Pakistan to ignite population management from the grassroots level by integrating our population management agenda into the local government framework."

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed

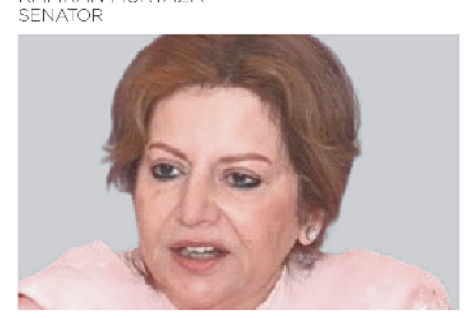
MUSHAHID HUSSAIN SAYED
FOUNDING CHAIRMAN, PARLIAMENTARY FORUM ON POPULATION

AZAM NAZEER TARAR
MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

DR. NAFISA SHAH
MEMBER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TAIMUR KHAN JHAGRA
FORMER FINANCE MINISTER KP

KAMRAN MURTAZA
SENATOR


SHAISTA PERVAIZ
FORMER MEMBER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MUHAMMAD FAROOQ SATTAR
MEMBER NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

TRANSLATING POLITICAL RESOLVE INTO STRATEGY

12:50 PM, DEC 1

The fourth session of the Pakistan Population Summit 2025 will highlight the urgent need for effective policy implementation at provincial and federal levels to address rapid population growth and its links to low economic performance, overstretched health systems, and strained social welfare programs. Chaired by Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, the session will stress that sustainable development is unattainable without confronting population pressures. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Founding Chairman, Parliamentary Forum on Population, will deliver the keynote address, calling for a revised, province-aligned population strategy. Public sector leaders, including Dr. Nafisa Shah, MNA; Dr. Farooq Sattar, MNA; Shaista Pervaiz, former MNA; Taimur Khan Jhagra, Former Minister of KP for Finance and Health; and Senator Kamran Murtaza, will emphasize the need for immediate, actionable policies to ensure economic and political stability.

SCAN TO VIEW AGENDA

DawnMedia

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